

## Some Ancient Eurasian Tool Names and Cultural Terms.

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### I. The Perforated Battle-axe and Other Weapons.

J. DE MORGAN, in his work *Prehistoric Man*, voices a warning that "we must not seek to give to prehistory a precision which it lacks". A case in point, especially as regards the danger of drawing too definite conclusions from archaeological material, is the problem of the so-called Nordic battle-axe. This is a double-bladed weapon found in South-Russian, Hungarian, Silesian, and Danish tombs of the third millenium B. C. The specimens from northern Europe are stone tools, those from Hungary and Russia are nearly all made of copper<sup>1</sup>. Although the relative dates of the tombs cannot be established with certainty, far-reaching hypotheses have been based on these finds.

A number of British, Russian, and Scandinavian scholars<sup>2</sup> consider the distribution of the battle-axes as a proof for the South-European origin of the Indo-Europeans. For they hold that these weapons were evolved from single-bladed copper tools which the nomads north of the Caucasus acquired through trade from Mesopotamia. Such tools are found even in the earliest Sumerian strata of the fifth millenium<sup>3</sup>; they were among the favorite weapons of the Babylonians<sup>4</sup> and later were used by the Hittites<sup>5</sup>. It is curious indeed that axe-heads perforated for the insertion of the handle occur only in Mesopotamia and the European areas named above. The method of fastening used elsewhere in the neolithic age was the primitive device of tying the axe to the

<sup>1</sup> See the illustrations given in V. G. CHILDE, *The Aryans* (1926), 190.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. CHILDE, *The Dawn of European Civilization* 149 ff., *The Aryans* 175—192; H. PEAKE and H. J. FLEURE, *The Steppe and the Sown* (Oxford 1928), 18 ff.; M. ROSTOVTSKY, *The Iranians and Greeks in South Russia*, Oxford 1922; T. E. KARSTEN, *Die Germanen* (1928), 36—49; and the literature quoted in these works. Among German scholars it is primarily O. SCHRADER who adheres to the theory of the South-Russian *Ur-heimat*. PEAKE and FLEURE include Transcaspia in the original IE domain.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. PEAKE-FLEURE, 94.

<sup>4</sup> Babylonian warriors with battle-axes are depicted, *e. g.*, on the Stele of Narâm-Sin; cf. L. DELAPORTE, *La Mésopotamie*, sect. 2, ch. 2.

<sup>5</sup> See CHILDE, *Ar.* 28; G. GLOTZ, *The Aegean Civilization* (1925), 234.